

**WCDCC Endorsement Policy amendment, for 2009 only**  
adopted April 15, 2009, by the Whatcom County Democratic Central Committee members

**Background:**

This proposal is based around the concept of certifying candidates as democrats, as early in the election cycle as possible, in order to provide party resources for all Democratic candidates vying for the party endorsement and nomination. Once certified, they would have access to all party resources that can be shared equally amongst the competitors including, but not necessarily limited to: Votebuilder access, membership lists, fundraising lists, office space, and institutional communications with its memberships (such as having event invitations in newsletters etc.)

Certification does not necessarily mean a candidate will be endorsed. After the filing deadline, the WCDCC membership, in accordance with the current Endorsement Policy, may endorse one or more candidates, or none. This process means that the WCDCC does not place itself as a barrier to the success of local candidates, but still is able to support local candidates for election by giving them access to critical election resources and allowing them to sink or swim on their own merit.

Example: 2007 Bellingham Mayoral Race

Rather than endorse the four Democratic mayoral candidates, we would certify them for Party resources before the Primary. . Each candidate would use the resources to support their bid for office. After filing, or after the Primary, the WCDCC Membership could choose to endorse a single, both or no candidates.

Because of State Democratic Party policy on Nominations in Partisan Elections, these certification rules may not be valid for partisan races in 2010. Therefore, they are only proposed here for the 2009 non-partisan election year, and should be revisited in the Spring of 2010 in light of existing state party nomination policy.

**The following text is adopted to replace item 2 of the current Endorsement Policy.**

**2: The Certification Process, to be used for the 2009 election cycle only**

**A: Definition**

Candidates may receive access to Party resources prior to endorsement if they are certified as a democrat. Certification does not imply endorsement by the Party. A candidate may not refer to certification in their campaign or publicity, but the party has no authority to bar the candidate from describing him or herself as a “Democrat”.

**B: Certification**

In order to be certified as a democrat, the candidate must submit a written application to the Chair of the WCDCC that demonstrates one of the following:

1. Ten signed declarations from Precinct Committee Officers from Whatcom County stating that they believe the candidate would faithfully represent the values of the Democratic Party in office.
2. Previous endorsement or certification as a Democrat.

3. Strong background in Democratic Party issues and politics and wishes for the Chair to approve their application for certification based on those factors (see Section 2D for criteria.)

The Chair may approve (or not) the candidate for certification upon receipt of these materials. If approved, see section C.

If the Chair does not approve the certification and the candidate wishes to appeal to the Executive Board for additional consideration, the Executive Board will consider the candidate's application at their next regular meeting using the same criteria outlined in Section D. The Executive Board may either vote on the application themselves, or if they deem it appropriate, may call the general membership to vote at their next regular meeting on the issue.

### **C: Post-Certification**

Once a candidate is certified, all WCDCC resources will be granted to the candidate that can be shared equally amongst the competitors including, but not necessarily limited to: Votebuilder access, membership lists, fundraising lists, office space, and institutional communications with its memberships (such as having event invitations in newsletters etc.) The Executive Board will vote on what resources will and will not be allowed if there are disagreements between the Chair and members of the Executive Board on what resources to grant to candidates.

### **D: Criteria for Certification**

Many factors may form a basis for Democratic certification. These include, but are not necessarily limited to: length of membership to a Democratic Party, involvement in Democratic issues, past donations to Democratic candidates, work with non-profits whose work closely parallels Democratic Party values.

### **E: Timing**

Certification and the resulting access to party resources is intended to provide resources early in the Primary campaign. Candidates may request certification any time after filing with the Public Disclosure Commission their intent to run. Once a candidate has been endorsed according to these rules, no other candidate for the same office may be certified for purposes of gaining access to party resources.

### **F: Losing Certification**

Once a candidate has been endorsed by the membership in accordance with this Endorsement Policy, resources being provided to competing candidates for the same position will be withdrawn. Data unique to a candidate's campaign, stored in a party-owned database, is considered the property of the candidate, and will be made available to his/her campaign. Example of such data is volunteer records stored in the "My Campaign" section of VoteBuilder.

If for any reason the validity of a certification of a candidate as a "democrat" is questioned, certification may be withdrawn using the same criteria and appeal process described in Section 2.B.